

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**COLORADO SMALL BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT CENTER PARTNERS WITH CLEAN TECH OPEN TO HELP SMALL BUSINESS COMPETE IN NEW ENERGY ECONOMY**

The South Metro Small Business Development Center's (SBDC) recent partnership with the first annual Rocky Mountain Clean Tech Open (CTO) is at the forefront of state government assistance to help Colorado small businesses participate in the New Energy Economy. This national pilot program of strategic partnership between the SBDC and the CTO gave small businesses the opportunity to associate with the largest clean tech business competition in the world.

This Colorado partnership will serve as a model for Small Business Development Centers in the six-state Rocky Mountain region, and will provide workshops and free consulting to Clean Tech Open participants. This dynamic, one-on-one approach will team entrepreneurs with SBDC consultants for personalized business plan coaching, and will ensure that Colorado's small businesses have the best chance to succeed in next year's competition.

"The participating companies will have an 85% success rate and will create approximately 900 new jobs in the region over the next five years," South Metro SBDC Director Marcia McGilley projects. Clean Tech Open participants competed for "Startup in a Box" packages of cash and services up to \$250,000 at the national level and received crucial coaching on business planning, presentation skills and small business growth strategies.

"This pilot program can now be scaled for the entire country allowing Small Business Development Centers to assist early stage, clean tech companies with market research, consulting and training," McGilley said. Colorado's network of 14 Small Business Development Centers, which have always provided free consulting and free or low-cost training to Colorado entrepreneurs, are now better equipped than ever to assist companies in the new energy or clean tech sectors.

"The great thing is that this relationship is only the beginning. Colorado's Small Business Development Centers can help any small business in Colorado 'green' their business through

our free consulting program, whether they enter the 2010 Clean Tech Open or not” says SBDC State Director, Kelly Manning. “A lot of small business owners don’t know where to start in order to reduce their environmental impact. In a down economy, it’s even harder to pay for non-essential services. The SBDC is free, and we’re here in Colorado to help small business owners ensure their own success.”

In 2009, Colorado’s Small Business Development Centers assisted clients to achieve:

- 370 Business Starts
- Over \$65 Million in Capital Formation, including Loans Obtained
- Over \$11 million in Procurement Contracting
- 1309 Jobs Created
- 1321 Jobs Retained which might have otherwise been lost

There are SBDCs throughout the state to ensure that service is available to business owners in every Colorado county. To find a location by you or for more information on Colorado’s Small Business Development Centers, please visit [www.coloradosbdc.org](http://www.coloradosbdc.org). For more information on the Rocky Mountain Clean Tech Open, please visit [www.cleantechopen.com](http://www.cleantechopen.com).